Volunteer Firemen

DECEMBER

1940

NATIONAL FIRE PROTECTION ASSOCIATION
INTERNATIONAL
60 Batterymarch Street Boston, Massachusetts

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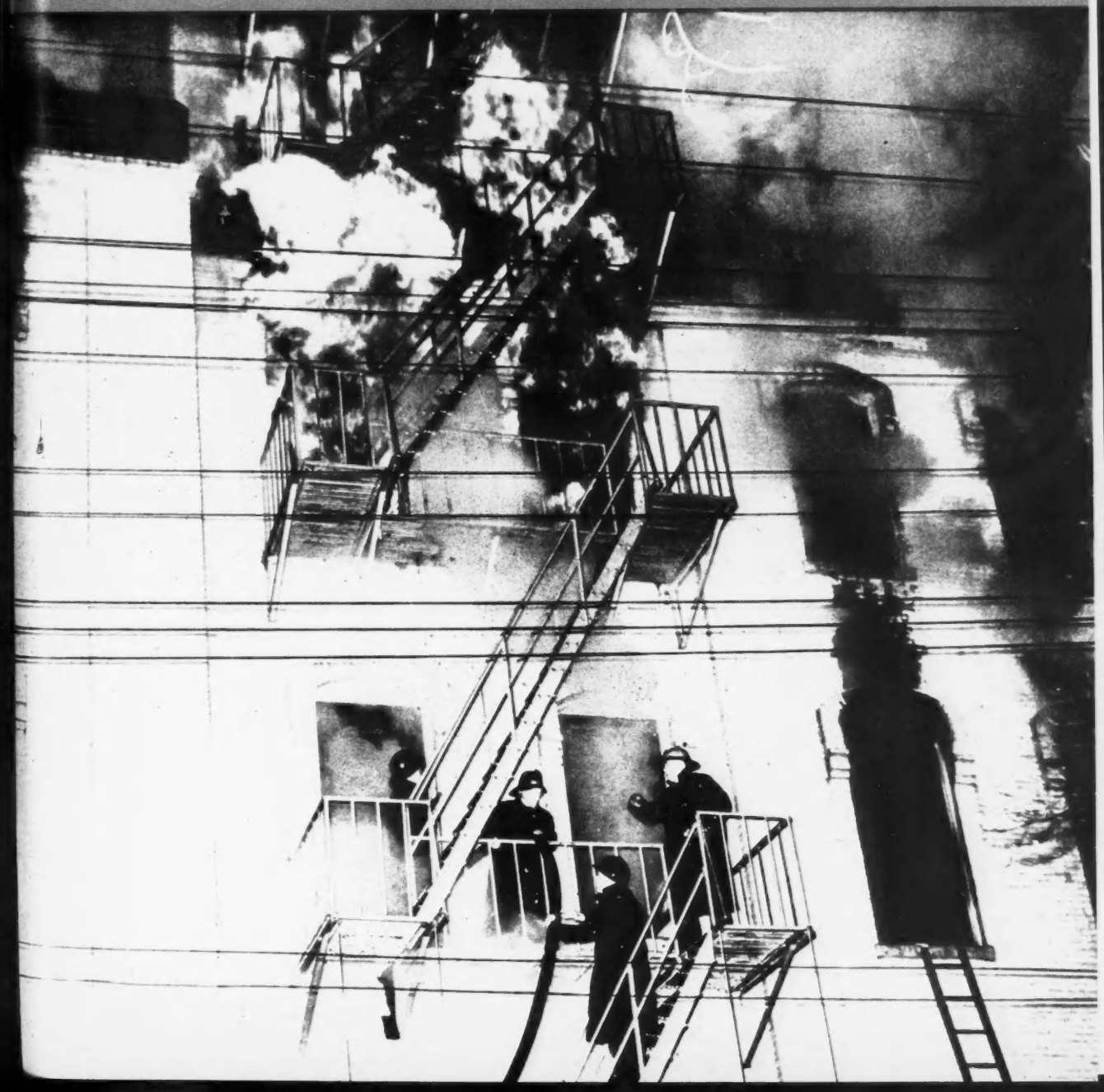

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Volunteer Firemen

Volume 7 **Number 12**

Published by the National Fire Protection Association, a voluntary non-profit organization, 60 Batterymarch Street, Boston, Mass.

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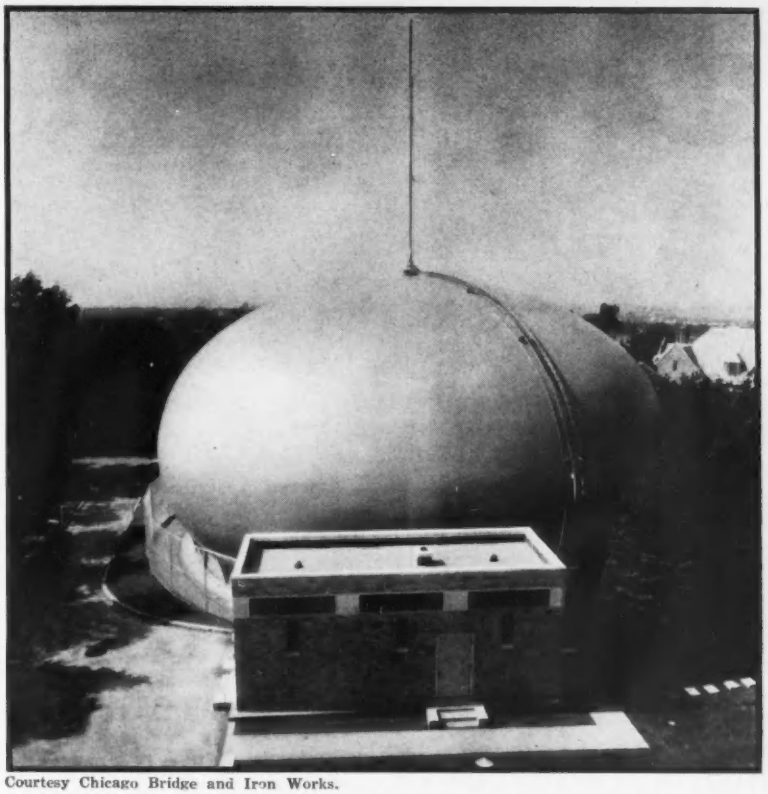
THERE is a story of the fatal fire in the Whitehall Hotel in Auburn, Maine, elsewhere in this issue. The cover picture shows the fire escape which was the only emergency exit the building had.

THE Whitehall was remodelled against the recommendation of the municipal building inspector who lost his job in the dispute over the building. This isn't the first case where a building inspector's judgment was overruled. It recalls the Terminal Hotel fire in Atlanta, Georgia, in 1938. Thirty-five persons died in that fire. Thirty years before, the building inspector refused a permit for the building, but a special ordinance was passed to allow it. Some of the members of the city council which passed that ordinance lived to see their gruesome handiwork.

DOTTING the land are cities with hotels no better than Auburn's Whitehall. Much can be done to make them safe. Some of them have already been so treated. One of these, the Lincoln Hotel in Joliet, Illinois, took fire when struck by lightning, only the day before the Auburn, Maine, hotel burned. The fire got into a roof space but the building was saved because the building was equipped with an automatic sprinkler system. The Joliet firemen deservedly got credit for a good stop, as they used the sprinkler equipment to advantage.



Courtesy Chicago Bridge and Iron Works.

This is a departure from the conventional but it is nevertheless a water tank. Its spheroidal shape provides a low and pleasing structure and is particularly suitable for the hill-top site where it is located in the town of Brookline, Mass. Ninety feet in diameter it has a capacity of 1,660,000 gallons.

ARE inspections by firemen worthwhile? The fire department in Cincinnati thinks so. A report of inspection activity in that city mentions one item alone that shows its worth. In a recent six-month period firemen-inspectors have secured the replacement of approximately 90,000 electric fuses which were of improper size for the circuits on which they were used. Firemen know that each such case of overfusing is a potential fire. Those who make inspections know also that the condition reported is typical in most places, and is probably worse in the country than in the city. Evidently many persons do not realize that the use of a 25 or 30 ampere fuse where a 15 ampere fuse is required is almost as serious an offense against safety as bridging a fuse with a penny or other fuse-jumper.

LAST month 5 departments with 53 men joined the Volunteer Firemen's Section for the first time. In addition 59 departments with 1,321 men renewed membership. This makes the total enrollment 693 departments and 14,591 men. The following departments are newly enrolled:

Polson Volunteer Fire Department, Polson, Montana.

Alplaus Volunteer Fire Company, Alplaus, New York.

Truro Township Volunteer Fire Department, Reynoldsburg, Ohio.

Campus Fire Station, Oklahoma A. & M. College, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Webster Springs Volunteer Fire Department, Webster Springs, West Virginia.

THE estimated U. S. fire loss for October, 1940, according to the National Board of Fire Underwriters is $22,091,140. This figure is based on notices of incurred loss received by insurance companies, members of the board, plus an allowance for unreported and uninsured losses. Losses for the first ten months of 1940 are slightly less than losses for the same ten months of 1939. The following table shows the losses for these months of 1939 and 1940:

	1939	1940
January	$27,615,316	$36,260,650
February	29,303,520	34,410,250
March	30,682,168	29,788,800
April	27,061,522	26,657,190
May	27,031,700	23,446,590
June	24,190,700	19,506,000
July	22,468,304	20,322,800
August	22,800,500	20,722,100
September	22,837,250	21,198,000
October	24,300,500	22,091,140
Total 10 months	$258,291,480	$254,403,520

They Could Have a Volunteer Fire Department

THE report of a suit filed by the city of Cincinnati, Ohio, against one of its suburbs, Anderson Township, for failure to pay $425 allegedly due to the city for fighting four fires in the Township during 1939, brings up the old question of whether it is good policy for a small community to depend upon a big neighbor for fire protection when it could have its own volunteer fire department.

It is stated that Anderson Township has already paid the city $2,700 for seventeen other fires fought during 1939. This makes a total fire fighting bill for last year of $3,125 for twenty-one fires. A township of 5,000 population having twenty-one fires a year, if not located near a large city would doubtless have a pretty good volunteer fire department of its own. Further, the $3,125 bill for buying outside protection would look like a sizable budget to many volunteer fire departments.

A properly equipped and trained volunteer fire department at home can certainly give better protection than a city fire company which must travel several miles after the call is officially put through. There is almost always reluctance to commit a township to pay for outside help until local officials are sure that the fire is beyond the control of any private or local fire fighting facilities. Volunteer fire departments today are generally well-manned with trained crews who know their local territory and have a personal interest in the protection of their neighbors' homes.

In addition, if a community is buying protection from a larger neighbor and both communities happen to have a fire at the same time, the purchaser may be told, "Sorry we are too busy to come just now."

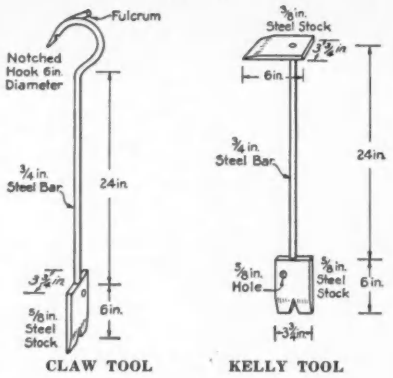
WPA Fire Stations and Other Protection

THE WPA has built 224 fire stations in the last five years. Additions have been made to 53 other stations and 2,010 others have been reconstructed or improved. These figures are given in a summary of work performed under WPA auspices during the five-year period July 1, 1935 to July 1, 1940. During this same period, the WPA reports that it provided for 1,247 miles of municipal signal systems a part of which were fire alarm systems. Reconstruction or improvement was made in 1,245 other miles of such line.

Municipal fire protection was further strengthened by new water mains and distribution lines laid in an amount of 11,247 miles. Improvement was made to an additional 2,894 miles. New wells provided, many of which must have been for fire protection, totaled 3,429 with improvements to 1,659. New storage tanks and reservoirs numbering 2,333 were built and 491 such tanks and reservoirs improved. These latter items added nearly a billion and a half gallons capacity to existing storage systems. The water systems whose storage tanks and reservoirs were improved had a capacity of over 24 billion gallons.

In forest protection, 4,973 new miles of fire breaks were laid and 763 miles improved. Fire and forest trails totaling 4,318 miles were newly provided and 1,365 miles of these trails were improved.

STANDARD FORCIBLE ENTRY TOOLS



CLAW TOOL KELLY TOOL

The drawings show latest variations of these important tools as described in recent bulletin of the International Association of Fire Department Instructors. Courtesy J. Ray Pence, Chief, Fire Department, Stillwater, Oklahoma, Secretary. The claw and bar, says Chief Pence, may be made from any good ¾ inch steel such as the steering column of a Model T Ford. Wedges may be made from a discarded cutter blade from a street grader or from large dies for cutting pipe threads. The holes are for convenience in hoisting, as a hook on the end to the hoisting line may be slipped through them.

Why Fire Drills Go Haywire

THEY are not letting anything get by in Memphis, Tenn. That city boasts that it is America's first city in fire prevention. And with good reason, too. For example, something wrong, very wrong, turned up in the course of a fire drill in one of the city's schools recently. This immediately sent Commissioner of Public Safety Joseph P. Boyle, Chief Irby Klinck of the fire department, and Ernest Ball, Superintendent of the city schools, into a huddle to make sure that the same sort of thing might not happen again. There was no suggestion of blaming anyone, but the folks in Memphis have been on the fire prevention job long enough to know that it means everlastingly checking up on conditions.

Last month District Chief A. J. Schaefer, Chief Fire Inspector of the fire department, selected a school in which to hold a surprise fire drill. This was done so that the fire department and school board might check up on the effectiveness of measures which had been adopted for the conduct of school fire drills. Without announcing the drill to any of the pupils or teachers, the alarm was sounded and 590 children and teachers were out of the building in exactly three minutes. Chief Schaefer asked the principal of the school if all the children were out and was assured that they were.

With the exception, the principal added, of children in the nursery, who were asleep!

That set off the fireworks. Chief Schaefer had to explain that the whole drill was haywire because no provision had been made to take care of this particular group of children. The children are sent to the nursery by parents who work during the day. The two teachers and an NYA worker who had the children in charge took it on themselves to decide that the alarm was only a drill and marched out without waking the children.

This illustrates a common fault of many school fire drills. It must be the principal's responsibility in such cases that every person in the building knows what to do in case of a drill and is instructed to get out. A drill can't be very helpful if exceptions are made or if conditions of an actual fire are not assumed.

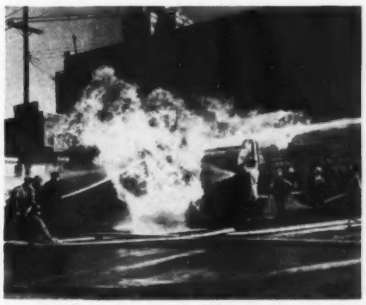
The Memphis Fire Department is on its job. When did you last check up on your school fire drills?

Montana's 1940 Short Course

MONTANA should be added to the list of states having fire schools in 1940. A two-day short course on September 27 and 28 was held at Polson under the sponsorship of the local fire department. The attendance was 39 men from 9 different cities. Instruction was given by a staff consisting of Chief Henry Quane of Anaconda, Claud Maxwell of Hamilton, Tom Lloyd of the Board of Fire Underwriters of the Pacific, State Fire Marshal Arthur Parsons, Jack Coombs, Universal Safety Appliances Company, Salt Lake City, and W. G. Brooks of the American La-France Company, Spokane, Wash. The cities represented were Whitefish, Stevensville, Ronan, Thompson Falls, Columbia Falls, Dixon, St. Ignatius, Hamilton and Kalispell. The school work was received enthusiastically and it was voted to have the school every year so the Polson Department is going to make it an annual event.

When the fire was discovered, as the tank truck was passing the Tulsa central fire station, flames were coming from the manhole cover and vents of the rear compartment of the tank. The first hydrant line was used to hit these flames in an effort to separate the flames from the vapors coming from the tank and thus snuff out the fire. This did not work. Next, wet tarpaulins were thrown over the flaming area as shown in the picture above. In this, the top line is employing a fog nozzle and the lower line, a solid stream, is holding on until another fog nozzle line could be brought up and turned on. This effort to smother the fire also failed because projecting clamps and vents prevented a snug fit of the tarpaulins.

Third, the use of foam was tried for a short time. This view, taken from the second floor of the central fire station, shows three water lines being used to keep the tank cool while a foam line (the top stream) applied foam from the generator around which the group of men are standing near the center of the picture. These efforts had taken about 40 minutes. The use of foam was given up when it was clear that the pressure within the tanks was increasing to such an extent that foam could not be effective. Also it was apparent that the tank was about ready to fail or explode. Nevertheless, water streams were kept on the tank to retard as much as possible the intensity of the fire although this involved considerable personal risk to the fire fighting crew.



And there it goes! The clamps holding the cover of the rear manhole give way. Note the gasoline "spill" just visible at the bottom of the sheet of flames. Firemen on the far side of the truck were almost trapped by the spill and one received serious burns. This picture shows the risk under which the men were operating. The flames came off in a sudden surge, of which this picture shows only the beginning. The vapors burned intensely in the air above the truck extending the flames over 60 feet high as shown by the large picture at the top of the page. The blaze continued at that intensity about 20 minutes in all.

Tulsa Firemen Fight A Tank Truck Fire

From Report by H. W. McBride, Inspector Oklahoma Inspection Bureau

AUTOMOBILE tank trucks for carrying gasoline should be kept off streets in the high value districts of cities and towns. This is the principal lesson of a spectacular fire handled by the firemen of Tulsa, Okahoma, on October 18.

The N.F.P.A. Suggested Ordinance for the Construction and Operation of Automobile Tank Trucks may be followed to obtain safe construction and operation of such trucks. The routing of tank trucks away from high value districts and heavy traffic is a matter of municipal regulation.

The driver of the truck unnecessarily chose a route through downtown Tulsa. The only fortunate factor in this choice was that the route took him by the central fire station. Firemen saw the truck on fire and so did pedestrians. These caught the driver's attention and he stopped the truck. An engine company turned out and got a hydrant line on the truck at once and other companies were summoned.

The truck had a capacity of about 3,800 gallons in two separate compartments. It was filled with 14 pound vapor pressure natural gasoline which is manufactured from casinghead (natural) gas. It is of lighter density, more volatile and more susceptible to expansion than ordinary gasoline. The tank had been filled shortly after midnight at Depew, Oklahoma, 45 miles away, and had then been driven to the oil company's yard some six miles southwest of Tulsa. There it stood from about 3:30 o'clock A. M. until the driver started, shortly after noon, for Barnsdall, Oklahoma, 40 miles northwest. It wasn't necessary at all for him to go through the center of the city. The fire was discovered at 1:50 o'clock P. M.

The tank was arranged so that it should be loaded with a 2 percent allowance for expansion of the liquid after loading. The night time temperature was approximately 46 degrees Fahrenheit. The tank sat in the sun in the oil company's yard all morning of a day that reached a noontime temperature of 85 degrees. The steel shell was probably 10 to 20 degrees hotter than that. A 50 to 60 degree rise in temperature can be estimated between the time the tank was filled and the time it started out on the road. The rise of temperature alone would be sufficient to cause the liquid to expand and fill the tank completely. The small manual valve on the rear compartment was found partly open after the fire and the rough steel manhole cover on the rear compartment was believed not to be gas tight. A slight overflow would be likely with the truck in motion. It was this overflow which took fire.

The fire fighters were obliged to turn their attention to the buildings on both sides of the street, destruction of which was threatened by the severity of the exposure. The flames in the tank finally subsided when most of the more volatile components of the gasoline had vaporized and after some water found its way into the tanks. After the fire there was about 200 gallons of water and 1400 gallons of gasoline left in the tanks.

ONTARIO, CANADA'S LARGEST PROVINCE, FIRST TO PUT AIR RAID DEFENSE PLANS IN EFFECT

FIRE departments in Canada and also in the United States have been watching with great interest the fire situation brought about in London and other English cities by air raids. Practically all of these fire departments are trying to figure out what responsibilities and activities might be theirs if their respective home towns or cities came under a similar air attack. The City of New York has already sent three firemen to England to obtain first-hand information. Other cities would probably like to send competent fire department observers to the war area, but the number of these is likely to be limited by practical considerations.

No official operations of the defense authorities in the United States or of the war and navy departments have yet resulted in published information as to what may be expected of U. S. fire departments as a part of their civil defense responsibilities.

Canada, however, is actively in the war and has set up air raid precaution plans through the medium of national and provincial civil defense committees. The first definitely formulated plans to be circulated for the information of the public come from the Civilian Defense Committee of the Province of Ontario which has just issued a 48-page book, Organization and Instruction Manual for Local Civilian Defense Committees.

Effective Defense Is Planned In Advance

IN issuing the manual it is pointed out that the setting up of local civilian defense committees is not directly related to the imminence of either attack or invasion. It results from the fact that attack, from either within or without, is a risk which cannot be ignored in view of events in other countries during the past year. It is recognized that preparations to meet and minimize the consequences of such attacks can only be effective if made well in advance.

Under the provisions of the Defense of Canada Regulations, the dominion government has constituted an Air Raid Precautions Committee of which the Dominion Fire Commissioner is one member. W. L. Clairmont, member N.F.P.A., is Dominion Fire Commissioner. Other members of the Dominion federal committee include six officials of the Department of Pensions and National Health, two military officers (one from the air force and one from the military branch), and an official of the St. John Ambulance Association. The purpose of this federal committee is to provide coordinated action by federal and provincial departments in civilian defense.

Organization in the Province of Ontario

THE Ontario organization for civilian defense is under a provincial civilian defense committee headed by the attorney general of the province. There is a vice chairman and a secretary of this committee. Provincial Fire Marshal W. J. Scott, a member of the N.F.P.A. Board of Directors, is a member of this committee. He is Director of Fire Services. On the committee are also directors of police, medical, public utility and transportation services.

The objects of the Ontario Civilian Defense Committee are:

(1) To create a volunteer civilian organization to meet emergencies occasioned by war.

(2) To protect life and property from every form of attack.

(3) To assist the civil powers by cooperating with all police and other law enforcement agencies.

(4) To combat subversive activities.

(5) To assist in fighting fires resulting from sabotage or other acts of war.

(6) To instruct the civilian population in emergency services.

(7) To cooperate with and assist all federal and provincial authorities in the performance of duties relative to the objects of civil defense.

Local Civilian Defense Committees

A CITY council or other governing body of a municipality is required to pass a resolution creating a local committee. The representative of the provincial organization will, on request, assist the municipality in organizing the local committee. Its personnel will consist of a headquarters staff of a chairman, vice chairman and secretary, and five controllers to be in charge of police, fire, medical, public utility and transportation services. The local Controller of Fire Services in most instances will be the fire chief unless more than one municipality is grouped in a single civilian defense committee area. In that case, one local fire chief will be designated as Controller of Fire Services for the entire area and other fire chiefs will work under his general direction.

A local advisory committee may also be formed and a public meeting will be held to explain the local organization and get its operation started. The defense committee will then meet to formulate plans and list volunteers, to arrange for training and for supplies of necessary equipment such as arm bands, gas masks, first aid material, and protective clothing. The federal authorities are planning to provide the latter equipment.

The general purpose of the local civilian defense committee is to provide adequate machinery for the direction and protection of the civilian population. It is stressed that the organization is purely voluntary, composed of volunteer civilian workers who are prepared to give freely of their time in the event that the emergency of war should so demand. None of the civilian defense committee activities is expected to place any large additional financial burden on the local communities.

The committee has the responsibility not only of setting up a suitable organization, but of providing for records, plans and maps, and providing suitable warning systems, and methods of communication.

Organization of Wardens

THE principal personnel additional to the regular municipal services that will be recruited will be a voluntary force of wardens. These wardens will be under the general direction of the police service and their function will be to form a liaison between the civilian defense committee and the population of the district. It will be their job to give out warnings, orders and instructions in case of attack.

For this service, citizens over 30 years of age will be selected. Preference will be given to those not immediately required or likely to be soon required for military service, but they must be of good health and personality. Only persons well known locally and of unquestioned loyalty will be selected.

The duties of wardens are listed as follows:

1. To be familiar with the organization of all civilian defense committee services and the most rapid and efficient means of communicating with them.

2. In the event of a blackout, to patrol the streets and make sure that it is complete and that no interior lighting is visible from the exterior.

3. To organize patrols in event of an air raid warning and to advise all persons encountered on the streets where to find the nearest shelter and to bring to safety all persons who have been lost or abandoned.

4. To report immediately the fall of bombs in their respective sectors.

5. To report all fires immediately to the fire department.

6. To report the actual or suspected presence of gas.

7. To assist occupants of damaged buildings to find shelter elsewhere.

8. To assist in rendering first aid to the injured.

9. To aid in arresting all fires while awaiting the arrival of the fire brigade.

10. To reconnoiter the extent of damage in their respective sectors and report as soon as possible the extent and nature of the damage, particularly breaks in water, gas mains or electric lines.

11. To guide the police, fire brigade, first aid and other parties to the scene of damage and to render any assistance that may be required.

12. To do all in their power to avert panic.

It is planned that a warden post should be established to cover a section of the community which is clearly designated. It is suggested that this would be a district inhabited by about 500 persons. In rural districts, this may be varied in accordance with the distribution of population. Buildings sheltering a large number of persons such as institutions, hospitals, apartment houses, hotels, schools, office buildings and factories will be each considered as a separate warden post. The warden's post would be located as close to the center of such a sector as possible and so located that telephone communication would normally be available. Possibly in some cases the location could be chosen so that there would be emergency communication available through a fire alarm box and through police two-way radio. In general, wardens are expected to live within the limits or in the immediate neighborhood of the sector to which they are assigned.

It is to be noted that general supervision of the movements of people are to be, as in peace times, in the hands of the police. The wardens are police auxiliaries. Warning messages are handled through the police services that also handle matters of traffic control, evacuation, the control of lighting if blackouts are required, the general maintenance of law and order, and protection against sabotage.

Fire Services

THE Ontario Fire Marshal is Director of Fire Services for the province and as such has the responsibility for instituting, training and developing local fire services and exercising general supervsion of them. One of his responsibilities will be to make a survey of existing fire equipment and personnel throughout the province. In the event of local deficiencies in fire department personnel or equipment, he will work with the local civilian defense committee in seeing that the fire department and other protection is brought up to such a standard that it can give good service.

The Job of the Local Fire Department

THE principal work of fire defense will be the responsibility of the local fire chief and the local fire department.

The fire chief is to be held responsible for proper cooperation between his fire department and war industries and essential services in his municipality. He must acquaint himself with any special hazards existing in industrial plants and plan the necessary methods to fight the fires. He must make detailed arrangements with the plant personnel for procedure in the event of a fire and he is expected to make regular inspections to maintain and reduce fire hazards in the plants. Furthermore, he is expected to discuss with the plant management the first aid fire protection facilities and the formation of plant fire brigades. The local fire department is expected to keep an inventory of private fire fighting equipment and facilities maintained at all key industries and plants.

The fire chief is held responsible for making plans for fire alarm warnings and especially for the handling of such calls in the event of disruption of the fire alarm system and of the telephone service. He must also lay plans to provide fire protection in the event that the pumping station or water main system is put out of commission by making a survey of existing lakes, ponds and streams, and making provision for their use or by constructing special water cisterns at strategic points.

The fire department will not ordinarily have to perform rescue work or clear up or repair damaged buildings, as other divisions, medical, public utilities and transportation, will be charged with such work.

It is strongly urged that all fire departments be brought up at least to the level required for the best service in peace time and under special circumstances should be increased to deal with extra war hazards. For example, many fire departments at present operate with fire companies insufficiently manned. For war-time needs, it is imperative that these companies be set up to operate at full strength.

To immediately add enough men to bring the companies up to full strength would place a financial burden on some municipalities that they could not undertake. It is therefore recommended that auxiliary fire fighters for the present be recruited on a voluntary basis and be given training with the idea that if an emergency develops they may be put on as paid members of regular fire forces to bring all fire companies up to standard strength. For this purpose, the local fire chief is expected to enlist and train an auxiliary fire fighting service, choosing men between 30 and 50 years who are physically fit. These men will be given special training in fire prevention work, the handling of hose lines and ladders in fire fighting, and special instruction as may be needed with regard to gas, first aid, incendiary bombs and other war emergency fire problems.

The local fire chief is expected to immediately submit to the provincial fire marshal as director of the fire services of the province a complete inventory of existing fire fighting equipment and facilities and an outline of what further equipment and personnel he needs. This does not mean war-time needs, but takes into account the normal peace-time fire fighting requirements.

In the event that there is only one piece of pumping fire apparatus in a municipality, it is recommended that a second piece of apparatus be obtained. In some instances the second apparatus or supplementary equipment required may be a trailer fire pumper, or a number of such pumpers which could be located at strategic points close to emergency water supplies. The fire chief is apparently expected to recommend to his local municipality the acquisition of additional equipment as reserve pieces or such supplementary equipment for regular fire companies as may appear to be desirable.

The civilian population is also to be urged by the chief to maintain in dwellings and places of business first aid fire fighting equipment with special emphasis on hand pump water fire extinguishers, boxes or pails of sand, and garden hose attached to taps or water tanks.

Photos of Whitehall Hotel fire, Auburn, Maine, Courtesy Lewiston Evening Journal. See also front cover picture

THE BUILDING INSPECTOR CALLED IT UNSAFE

Two Women Had to Die to Prove the Court Which Overruled Him Was Wrong

THERE is no new lesson to be learned from this fire. It is notable principally because of the story of the cupidity and stupidity which were the real cause of the fire. In most cases this story never appears.

The building inspector lost his job in the dispute over the safety of this building. But it is doubtful if he derives much satisfaction from the spectacular way in which he was vindicated.

The hotel was built 65 years ago and was a shoe factory before it was a hotel. In 1910 it was reported to have been remodeled with stores on the first floor and later, apartments above. The city got an injunction after the owner in 1922 had illegally added three additional wooden stories. The injunction pended 15 months. Then, as reported by the Lewiston *Journal*: "the same justice who had issued the original injunction declared that 'the evidence fails to support this charge (that the building was a fire hazard).' The justice's decision went on to point out that the delay of 15 months since the granting of the temporary injunction had 'served to test whether the existing construction is of a substantial character; no evidence of structural weakness manifesting itself during this period has been presented'."

The learned justice probably isn't very happy about this decision either. It shows how difficult is the job of those who would educate the public to recognize fundamentals of fire prevention and fire protection.

The fire department got its first call by telephone at 3:41 a. m. It was reported that the night clerk discovered the fire burning in the basement. From there it spread to the upper floors, probably through the unfirestopped walls which caused the building inspector to brand the structure as unsafe. One woman who died was on the top floor, and another, reported missing after the fire, had a room on the fourth floor.

The fire did not appear to have spread with unusual rapidity, but there was the usual difficulty of rousing sleeping people and getting them out through smoke-filled corridors and stairways. Most of the 76 persons in the hotel made their way out down the stairs, by way of a fire escape or over ladders raised by firemen. A fire escape had been installed a few months before the fire at the insistence of the fire chief and the state fire marshal. Seven or eight people owed their lives to the aerial ladder made available when the Lewiston firemen came over to aid. Very few cities have ladders in fire apparatus long enough to reach an eighth story window. Auburn's department had none. The city had one service ladder truck with at least one 55 foot ladder. But most of the ladders available were those commonly carried on pumpers and hose trucks, 24 to 28 feet long.

Fire escapes are one way to make such old buildings safer. But fire escapes are not very satisfactory as emergency exits. At best they're a makeshift, employed only when a property owner cannot be made to provide anything better. But safety in buildings is not obtained by the use of fire escapes, nor in fact by the employment of any single measure. How to obtain such safety is described in the N.F.P.A. Building Exits Code. This document contains a special chapter on hotels. This code stresses the enclosure of stairways, equipping combustible buildings with automatic sprinklers and the use of fire alarms.

The building inspector was right, of course, when he refused to permit the height of the building to be increased from five stories to eight. The highest building of this construction permitted under the provisions of the Building Exits Code is six stories, but then only if the building is sprinklered throughout, and if the stairways are enclosed.

EDITORIAL
Lewiston Evening Journal, October 25, 1940
(A paper serving the twin cities of Lewiston and Auburn, Maine.)

The Whitehall Hotel in Auburn was once a shoeshop.

Fifteen years ago, the owner, now dead, constructed three stories to expand apartment facilities.

The Auburn building inspector refused a permit. The owner built just the same.

The case after being in the court a year was settled to allow the wooden top to remain on the four story brick factory building. It was a famous local case.

One of the reasons why the building inspector refused to grant a permit was the lack of fire stops, either vertical or horizontal.

This morning two women lost their lives in the worst fire tragedy here in years. It was a miracle that more lives were not sacrificed.

Spectators at this morning blaze will wake at night hearing the screams of terrified persons, and the frantic cry of a woman who fell back into the flames, a hand and an arm visible on a window sill before the end.

There are other firetraps, potential hellhouses that may claim human toll and suffering in Lewiston and Auburn.

The lesson of the Whitehall fire and insufficiency of fire fighting apparatus to cope with tall buildings, was burned into public consciousness, today, but it will soon fade unless by ordinance and statute, provision is made for the safety of those that live in public houses.

SABOTAGE!

In any concern whose products or services are vital to our national defense program, sabotage is today a very real and serious threat. This threat cannot be met effectively unless protection measures include appropriate types of *automatic* protection systems. Every establishment faced with a sabotage hazard will find A.D.T. Automatic Protection Services an effective weapon for discouraging and defeating sabotage attempts.

Aero Automatic Fire Alarm: Detects fire automatically *when it starts,* and summons the fire department automatically.

Sprinkler Supervisory and Waterflow Alarm: Electrically supervises vital parts of the sprinkler system—thus, attempts to disable the sprinkler by closing valves, etc., are instantly and automatically detected. Also makes the sprinkler an automatic fire alarm, automatically summoning the fire department the instant a sprinkler head opens, or in case of a serious leak.

Burglar Alarms, including new and improved types of Invisible Ray devices, which make it possible to "rope off" from intrusion any area, large or small, inside or out, by means of beams of invisible light.

Watchman's Central Station Reporting Service: Insures continuous, orderly and adequate patrols. Failure of the watchman to signal on time results in immediate investigation by A.D.T. Central Station guards. Also provides the watchman with means for summoning appropriate help in any emergency.

* * *

If there are any establishments in your territory which, in your opinion, need automatic protection, please let us know and we shall be glad to consult the owners about A.D.T. Protection. Your confidence will, of course, be respected. Booklets describing A.D.T. Services are available upon your request. Please address A.D.T., 155 Sixth Avenue, New York.

A. D. T. ELECTRIC PROTECTION SERVICES

Controlled Companies of **AMERICAN DISTRICT TELEGRAPH CO.** *155 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y.*

CENTRAL STATION OFFICES IN ALL PRINCIPAL CITIES OF THE UNITED STATES

A·D·T

Electric Protection Services

AGAINST FIRE · BURGLARY · HOLDUP

A NATION-WIDE ORGANIZATION

Here's Wishing You a Hot Time—
Without a Fire

A Christmas Tree with colored lights
Is something to admire
Be sure they are in first class shape
Or you may have a fire.

Hot ashes in a box of wood
Though they may seem quite dead
Have a nasty knack of taking light
When you have gone to bed.

Now gasoline is just the thing
To run the family bus
But when it's used for cleaning floors
It can make an awful muss.

And don't forget your furnace draught
When you go out we pray,
For to leave a red hot furnace
Is a thing that does not pay.

We trust you'll take this as it's meant,
Just friendly, good advice.
Who knows but it may be the means
You'll live a longer life.

We wish you heaps of gifts old Pal,
Just heaps of joy and luck,
And that if we come to see you,
We won't have to bring our truck.

We greet you at
Christmas
and sincerely hope the
New Year
brings you
happiness and contentment.

New Toronto Fire Dept.
Chief H. Walton and Brigade

And that if we come to see you, We won't have to bring our truck.

The Fire Department's Best Wish for Your Christmas

Firemen everywhere second the sentiments on the above Christmas card of the New Toronto, Ontario, Fire Department. For during the holiday season they make many calls which are anything but social, due to the annual plague of Christmas fires.

Progressive fire departments, like that of New Toronto, try to give a few commonsense and helpful suggestions which if observed will keep the holidays pleasant and safe.

Here are some of the many tips which firemen are passing on to the citizens of their communities. Firemen point out that an evergreen tree, while relatively hard to ignite when it is growing from the moist ground, dries out and becomes a serious fire hazard in a house.

One of the best ways to get around this is to set up the tree in a tub or bucket of water. The tree will absorb water for a long time and thus retain much of its normal dampness due to which it does not burn freely.

The tree must be firmly set up so that it will not topple over, and should be set away from stoves and radiators that would dry it out quickly. It should never be set where, if it caught on fire, it might block a door. It should be decorated only with asbestos, glass and metal. The tree alone will make all the fire anyone would care to have in his house without the added fuel of paper, cotton snow and pyroxylin decorations.

Christmas is a season of unusually heavy use of electricity. Cut some of the load off circuits when fuses begin to blow, don't bridge the fuses. The wide use of electric extension cords, Christmas tree lights, and lights in windows, brings new electrical hazards to every home. Extension cords and other electrical equipment should bear the label of Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc. Trees bearing lights should not be decorated with tinsel. It may cause a short circuit.

If there is a fire extinguisher in the home, it should be checked to make sure it will operate and placed where it will be handy in case of a fire. A good measure of fire protection available in nearly every home is the garden hose. It can be connected to a faucet within reach of the tree and kept there as long as the tree is in the house. Home owners should be urged to learn the location of the nearest fire alarm box, or to post the number of the fire department near the telephone.

Not only in the home but in stores must people be protected against fire and panic hazards. Packing materials and rubbish accumulate more rapidly during the rush season than at other times of the year and the regular and prompt disposal of these quick burning materials must be provided for. Exits and aisles must be kept unobstructed, and exit ways must be properly marked. First aid fire equipment should be within easy reach in all parts of the building.

Volunteer fire departments have a special responsibility to look after these things at Christmas. The homes and stores in their territory probably do not have the day in, day out supervision given to fire hazards through the regular inspection service given by many paid departments. Inspection calls at danger points are a fine service to the community.

For instance, perhaps there is to be a special Christmas party. It matters little whether it is sponsored by a church, grange, lodge, or social club. The chances are that no one has thought of the hazard of excessive use of combustible decorations. (Such a party was the fire at the schoolhouse at Babb Switch, Oklahoma, in which 33 died. Another was a fire at a Selma, Alabama, country club, fatal to six women in combustible costumes.) A word of safety from someone from the fire department would be helpful. No one could possibly take offense, especially as you can explain that you've come beforehand, rather than later with the truck.

The Completely Scientific Fire Department

"So you want to report a fire!"

It was the man who takes the fire calls speaking.

"Don't you know the term 'fire' is obsolete? It's merely a common word implying rapid oxidation. . . .

"Yes, this is the fire department! At least, we were called that in the early days of our profession. Now we are officially "The Municipal Rapid Oxidation Suppression Unit.' . . . .

"If you will leave your address we will be glad to send out our staff of oxidation analysis specialists to determine if you have actually observed an authenticated case of the phenomenon of rapid oxidation. We always send our analysis specialists out first as we are attempting to reduce the number of our illegitimate calls (false alarms to you) . . . . .

"As a matter of fact we are only required to immediately respond to audible or visible signals responsive to heat actuated devices or photo-electric cells, or other so-called 'automatic alarms.' We no longer recognize alarms given by the general public as *they* are hardly qualified to properly analyze true rapid oxidation. . . . .

"You say you see 'smoke' coming from the floor. Do you know whether it is from gases and carbon products of combustion or is merely visible water vapor? As I stated before we will send out our analysis staff for confirmation of your report. . . . .

"You say that you can now see the blaze, and you think it will require two alarms if we don't hurry?

"We don't have two-alarm fires any more. For heavy fire fighting we now use the newly developed 'heavy water.' It is made with heavier hydrogen than that used with the oxygen in the old water, and if I do say so, our heavy water packs a punch that will flatten any fire. . . . .

"You say that you are on the twentieth floor and you want to know whether we can pump our heavy water to that elevation?

"Have no fear. We have replaced our old pump operator with a hydraulic engineer. He scientifically calculates the energy required to provide a jet of water against any pressure 'head'. . . '.'

Jerry Wilkins, Fireman First Class, was listening to all this. At this point, however, the man who was sitting beside him gave him a nudge. "Wake up, Jerry, you've been snoozing through the fire college lecture on the 'Chemistry of Fire.'"

—*Warren Y. Kimball.*

Approved FOR SAFETY*

*U. S. BUREAU OF MINES APPROVAL NO. 1405

improved IN COMFORT AND EFFICIENCY

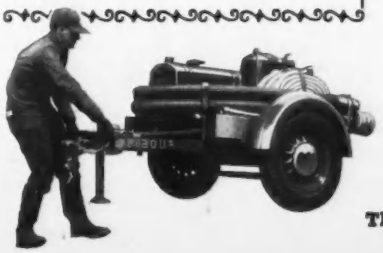
The M·S·A ALL-SERVICE GAS MASK

WITH ALL-VISION FACEPIECE

Approved for protection against all industrial gases, fumes and smokes (including carbon monoxide), the famous M.S.A. All-Service Mask gives the firefighter *all comfort* as well! With the new All-Vision Facepiece, vision is unrestricted, lens-fog is eliminated, dead air space is reduced to the minimum, and easy gas-tight fit of the molded all-rubber facepiece is provided for any face without binding or local pressure. In every finer detail, you get increased comfort and convenience—at the new low price! Have us demonstrate the M.S.A. All-Service Mask for *your* Department, without obligation—and write for Bulletin No. EA-6.

MINE SAFETY APPLIANCES COMPANY
Braddock, Thomas and Meade Sts., Pittsburgh, Pa.
District Representatives in Principal Cities

As far away as the
DUTCH EAST INDIES
LABOUR FIRE TRAILER
PROVIDES EMERGENCY PROTECTION



● The dependability and inbuilt stamina of LaBour Fire Trailers are recognized even in far off Java, where these units have been selected to furnish protection against the increased threat of fire due to the military situation. Compact, easy to handle, and delivering powerful fire-fighting streams even under conditions of dirty water from pools or rivers, LaBour Fire Trailers are useful *everywhere*. Their low cost makes them an excellent investment as *extra* equipment. Write for details.

THE LABOUR CO., Inc. 1573 Sterling Ave. Elkhart, Indiana, U. S. A.

HAPPIER HOLIDAYS ASSURED

If Your Community is Protected by

A FEDERAL WEATHERPROOF VERTICAL SIREN

Federal Electric Co., Inc.

8717 S. State St. Chicago, Ill.

The "Model A" Super

Which Every Volunteer Fire Department Should Know About

Both 1 Quart and 1½ Quart Sizes

Every volunteer Fire Department should know the exclusive qualities of this first-aid extinguisher which experience shows should be the first to be carried into any fire because:—

FIRST:—

It is safe to use on electrical fires. Fyr-Fyter fluid is not only a powerful fire extinguishing fluid, but a most certain insulation—safeguarding the operator against serious injury or possible death from electrical contact.

AND SECOND:—

It is effective on concealed fires in walls and other "hard to reach" locations and is effective also on fires in greases, oils and the more flammable liquids.

SALESMEN WANTED

If you are interested in adding to your income by spare time work or in building a permanent business for yourself without investment in stock, fixtures, etc., write for our new Dealer's Plan to

THE FYR-FYTER COMPANY

Dept. 20-60 DAYTON, OHIO

$10.00-$3.00-$2.00 EACH MONTH

PYRENE PRIZE LETTER CONTEST

SINCE this contest started, sponsored jointly by VOLUNTEER FIREMEN and the Pyrene Manufacturing Company of Newark, N. J., prizes have been won by over 230 firemen.

Why don't you try it this month?

You can win a cash prize as these 230 did.

Besides, you will be helping to show how fire extinguishers, day after day, do good work in stopping fires. In the prize-winning stories this month we have two cases where life was undoubtedly saved because there were extinguishers handy and because someone knew how to use them.

No fancy writing, no formality. Just send in your entry.

FIRST PRIZE—$10.00

ARTHUR JONES, *Chief*
Swayzee and Sims Township
Fire Department
Swayzee, Indiana

Another Fire in Spilled Gasoline

I have a small garage and house the fire trucks for the town of Swayzee and for Sims Township. One evening about 9 o'clock a farmer drove in with a tractor with fuel pump trouble. He took the pump off and I repaired it and put it back on. He said he would put the gas line back. I did not know that there was no shut-off valve on the tank. When he tried to put the line back, he spilled gas all over the floor and on his clothes. Then the gas line touched the hot starter switch and we were off!

The fire singed my hair and started to burn my shoes. I ran back to the fire truck. It was dark there but I got a 2½-gallon extinguisher. As soon as I turned it upside down, I saw it was a soda-acid. I went back and got a 2½-gallon foam unit. By that time the farmer's clothing was all on fire to his waist and his shirt sleeves were blazing, sending flames up to the ceiling. I turned the extinguisher on him until the fire was out and then pushed him outside. I then began on the fire in the tractor and worked on it until I could get hold of the gas line. This I folded so the gas could not run out on the floor and then went after the rest of the fire. The foam unit put out most of the fire but I had to finish it with a 1-quart carbon tetrachloride type I carry in my service truck.

I then took the burned man to the doctor. He was burned pretty badly on the arms and face but is all right now. He says I saved his life.

SECOND PRIZE—$3.00

MAX WOODS
Columbia Fire Department
Columbia, Missouri

Puts Out Burning Clothing

One day while standing in front of the station, I saw a man with his clothing ablaze run out of the beverage plant across the street and run my way. As there was no material nearby to smother the burning clothing, I ran inside the station, grabbed a soda-acid extinguisher off the nearest truck, and ran to the front again to meet the man.

By this time his entire body was covered with flames, but I turned the tank over, sprayed his burning clothing and soon had the fire completely extinguished.

We summoned an ambulance, and while waiting for it to arrive, we sprayed the man's burns with tannic acid. Although he suffered third degree burns, he is alive and well today.

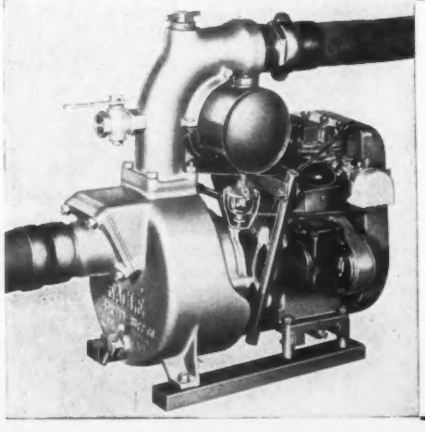
I learned later that the man had been cleaning the motor of a delivery truck with gasoline, and in doing so spilled some of the fluid on his clothing. Another mechanic, starting the truck, had caused it to backfire, setting the clothes on fire.

THIRD PRIZE—$2.00

M. R. CLEMENT
Orange Fire Department
Orange, California

Extinguishes Fire in Pulley

Last summer I was employed at a lumber yard, and was working in the mill, using the rip saw. The other three employees, including the manager, were over at the cement warehouse, about a block away. Suddenly I could smell smoke. For the moment I thought it was the saw binding. The smell kept getting worse and finally I looked up to



Get water to your pumper with this

PORTABLE BOOSTER PUMP

Pumps from Well - Lake - Stream, through 200 feet of fire hose.

- **Easily carried by two men**
- **Occupies but little space**
- **The price is surprisingly low**

Descriptive Circular Sent On Request

THE GORMAN-RUPP CO.

Mansfield, Ohio

see a flame coming from a worn overhead pulley.

The extinguisher that was in the mill was temporarily out of service. The next thought was for the 2½-gallon soda-acid extinguisher hanging in the finishing shed across the plant. I turned off the machinery and ran to the other shed after it. Returning, the flame was leaping about five feet up a wooden beam and starting to catch the wooden shingles afire.

I climbed up a twelve-foot ladder carrying the extinguisher in one hand, and ran across the cat walks over the rafters to the fire. In a very few seconds I had the fire out.

CONTEST RULES

1. Contestants in the Pyrene Prize Letter Contest must be members of their local fire department.
2. Letters are to describe actual experiences where an approved fire extinguisher of any make has saved lives or property.
3. Trade names may be used but will be deleted in publication. Publishers reserve the right to edit winning letters to permit publication.
4. Each contestant automatically vouches for the truth of the facts presented from his own or others' experience.
5. Only one letter may be submitted each month.
6. Letters must be legibly written in ink or typewritten on white paper, one side only. Preference will be given to letters not over 250 words in length.
7. Letters received after the 8th of the month will be judged in following month's competition.
8. Monthly prizes in cash will be: 1st, $10.00; 2nd, $3.00; and 3rd, $2.00.
9. Address contest letters to Pyrene Prize Letter Contest, National Fire Protection Association, 60 Batterymarch St., Boston, Mass.

PUBLICATIONS

Civil Service Manual. (168 pages. 25 cents. Public Document Division, Room 116, State House, Boston.) For the guidance of applicants for the fire service and for promotion in the fire service of cities and towns of Massachusetts. Prepared by the Massachusetts Civil Service Commission. Contains material on fire apparatus and equipment, spontaneous ignition, first aid, inspections, hydraulics and a compilation of state laws and fire marshal regulations.

The Work of the Fire Service During and Following Air Raids, by Fred Shepperd. (Educational Bulletin No. 3, 16 pages, 15c.) International Association of Fire Chiefs, 24 West 40th Street, New York, N. Y.

CATALOGS

The American Chain & Cable Co., Inc., of Bridgeport, Conn., announces a new catalog of Weed tire chains. A feature of the catalog is a snow map showing for each state the number of times it snowed last winter and the average depth of snow. Write for DH-4 Weed Chain Catalog.

Information on its line of industrial fire hose for mill and office, plant protection, especially important now that the national defense effort is calling for every precaution, is given by The B. F. Goodrich Company, Akron, Ohio, in a new catalog section on this subject. Ask for Catalog Section 3750.

CAIRNS

{SINCE 1836}

Regulation Style

Drop Brim Style

HELMETS

With CUSHION LINING

The Cairns "American Regulation" is still the standard helmet with department chiefs throughout U. S. and Canada, and in many neighbor nations to the South. The smaller "Drop Brim" style is preferred by some. Made in leather or aluminum, both styles can be supplied on order with the Cairns "Cushion Lining" that absorbs shocks, insulates, grips the head firmly without pressure, and can be easily removed for cleaning.

DEPARTMENT RECORDS

You'll need our new Loose-Leaf Fire Record Book, in sizes from 375 to 1500 alarms, for your 1941 records. Let us supply also your Secretary's Record Book, Secretary's forms, Membership Certificates, etc.

CAIRNS & BROTHER
Write for Catalog 30-C
444 Lafayette Street New York

Give Firemen protection AGAINST CARBON-MONOXIDE *of course,* but also AGAINST SMOKES and FUMES

Do the masks that you now use really protect a man against smoke suffocation and fume poisoning? Are you sure? You can easily test them. Write on official stationery for Acme Smoke Tester, which will be mailed FREE.

Here is an All Purpose Mask that, besides effective protection against all injurious gases, also actually gives better than 95% protection against all Smokes and Fumes.

This incomparable mask is the Acme Type FD—one of a line of masks and other safety appliances for fire-fighting, industrial, and military uses, manufactured by Acme Protection Equipment Company, 3614 Liberty Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Write for new Folder 401.

New Improved ACME
full-vision
ALL PURPOSE GAS MASK

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P		
Panic in Theatre Fire Averted	Mar.	10
Parachuting to Forest Fires	Aug.	9
Parkway Protection	Mar.	4
"Pied Piper" Tactics Trap Apparatus Chasers	Sept.	12
"Preventing Fires through Electrical Safety" Film	Feb.	12
Pumper:		
Capacity	Feb.	6, 7
Performance	Aug.	10
Suction from Flooded Basement	Sept.	12
Pumpers, Latest Style Developments	Oct.	9
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Quads	June	4
Developing Heavy Streams with	July	4
Question and Answer Manual of the Union Fire Association	Jan.	3
Questions on Ventilation	May	12
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Radio: Use by Fire Departments	Apr.	8
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Report on the Fire, A	Apr.	12
Rescue Procedure, Suggested	Sept.	8
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Rope Ties for Rescue Work	Sept.	8
Rubber, Artificial	July	8
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Safe Wiring in the Summer Camp	July	5
Salaries, Fire Department, 1940	Aug.	12
Salvage Covers Pay Back Cost in Short Order	Mar.	4
School Fire, Alpena, Mich.	Aug.	1, 3
Clovis, New Mexico	July	12
Jacksonville, N. C.	July	12
Pine Bluff, Ark.	July	12
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School Fire Drills, Why They Go Haywire	Dec.	4
School Fires, 1000	Jan.	10
School Stage Footlights	June	13
Schools, Fire Trap	Apr.	6
Scientific Fire Department, The Completely. By Warren Y. Kimball	Dec.	11
Score Card for Apparatus Drivers	Oct.	4
For Fire Chiefs	June	12
She Met Her Match, Poem	Aug.	7
Signaling Committee Meeting	June	2
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Siren Calls	Aug.	11
Speed of Fire Apparatus	Sept.	3
Spray Nozzles	July	8
Spring Clean Up Campaign	Apr.	4
Sprinkler Committee Meeting	June	2
Sprinkler Equipments. Revision of N. F. P. A. Standard	Sept.	4
Sprinkler Tester	Feb.	7
Sprinklers for Schools	Mar.	5
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"Squad System" Hookup	June	4
Stage Footlights	June	13
Static Spark	July	5
Steel Turnings Fire	Jan.	8
Stopping False Alarms	Sept.	10
Streets of Same Name Bedevil Maryland Department	Mar.	4
Style Developments in Modern Pumpers	Oct.	8
T		
Talks for Firemen, N. Y. University Series	July	3
Tank Truck Fire, Dover, N. J.	Nov.	1, 3, 5
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Tanks and Towers in Imperial Valley Earthquake	July	7
Telephone Set Used by Humboldt, Iowa, Firemen	Aug.	3
Theater Fire, Bartlesville, Okla.	Mar.	5
Florence, S. C.	Mar.	10
Parsons, Kan.	Mar.	5
Tools for Forcible Entry	Dec.	4
Tornado, Albany, Ga.	Apr.	5
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Maryland Program	May	4
Memphis Instructors Conference	Oct.	7
Montana's 1940 Short Course	Dec.	4
Oklahoma Plan	July	12
Teachers Course, Indiana	Mar.	5
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Tulsa Firemen Fight a Tank Truck Fire	Dec.	5
U		
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	June	3
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W		
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Water Solutions, Non-Freezing	Nov.	11
Whistle Talk	Aug.	12
Winter Hazards	Nov.	11
Wiring, Summer Camp	July	5
Wooden Shingle Roof Ordinances, U. S.	Jan.	3

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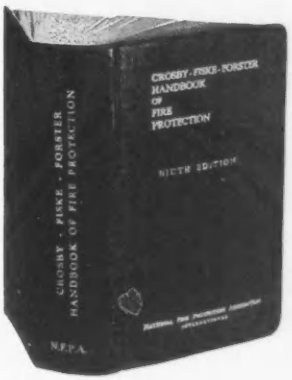

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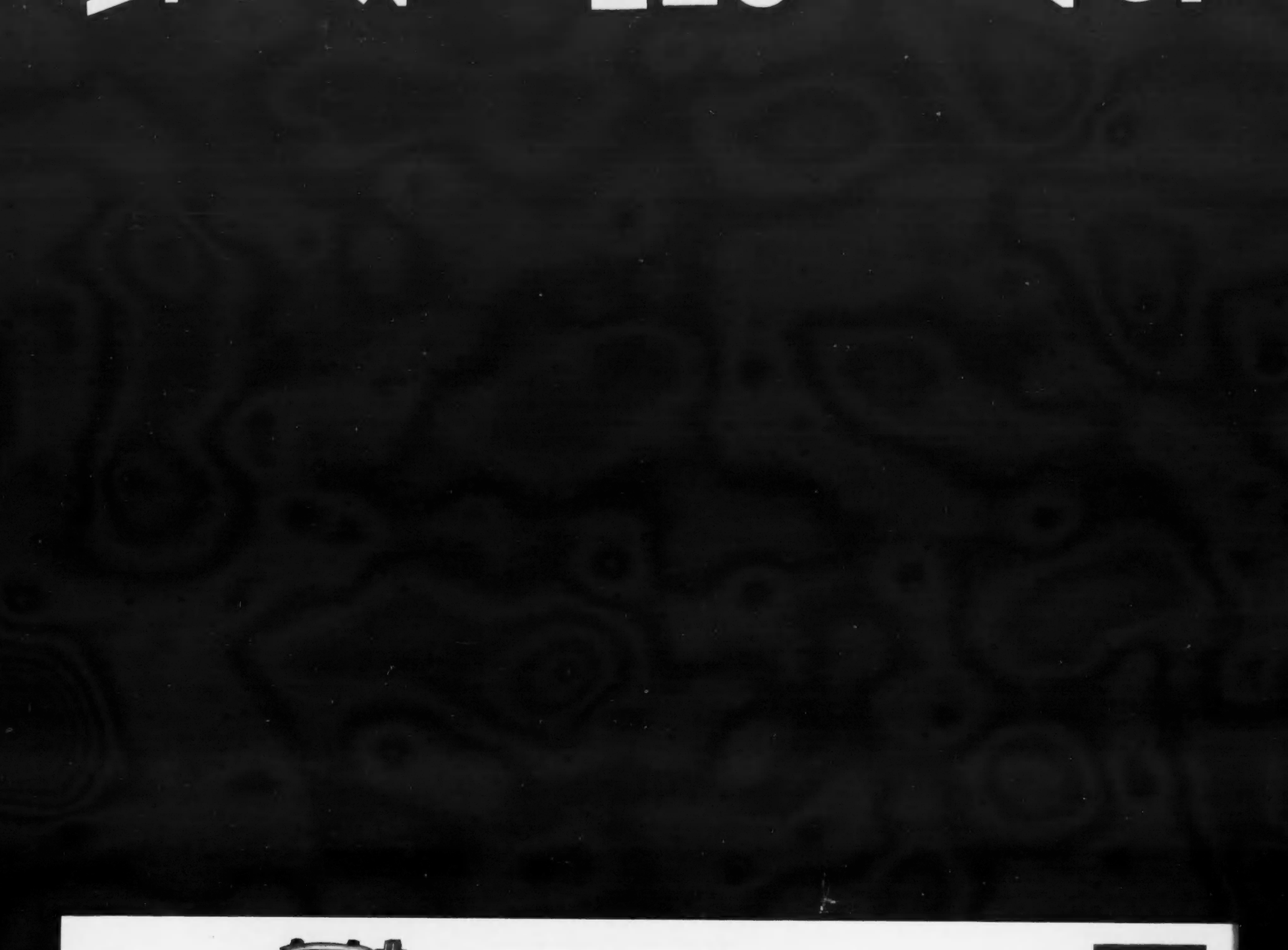
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